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ABSTRACT

This is a publication of a 3-year Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications project, "Balancing Quality and Access: Reducing State Policy Barriers to Electronically Delivered Higher Education Programs," designed to foster an interstate environment that encourages the interstate electronic delivery of quality higher education programs. After an introductory chapter, chapter 2 contains a copy of the "Principles of Good Practice in Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs." The Principles are the first set of basic standards for reviewing distance education programs offered via technology. They have been endorsed by a number of higher education governing and policymaking bodies in the western United States, as well as by the regional accrediting community. Chapter 3 contains descriptions of programs that were nominated by the higher education agency in the states in which they are located as exemplifying good practices in distance education. These programs originate from the following schools: Bellevue Community College, WA; California State University, Chico, CA; Oregon Health Sciences University; Red Rocks Community College, CO; University of Alaska Southeast; University of Arizona; University of Hawaii; University of Montana; University of Phoenix, AZ; University of Wyoming; Utah State University; and Washington State University. Chapters 4-10 discuss good practices in the following areas: curriculum and instruction; institutional role and mission; faculty support; resources for learning; student services; commitment to support; and evaluation and assessment. The publication also contains contact information for each featured program. (DLS)

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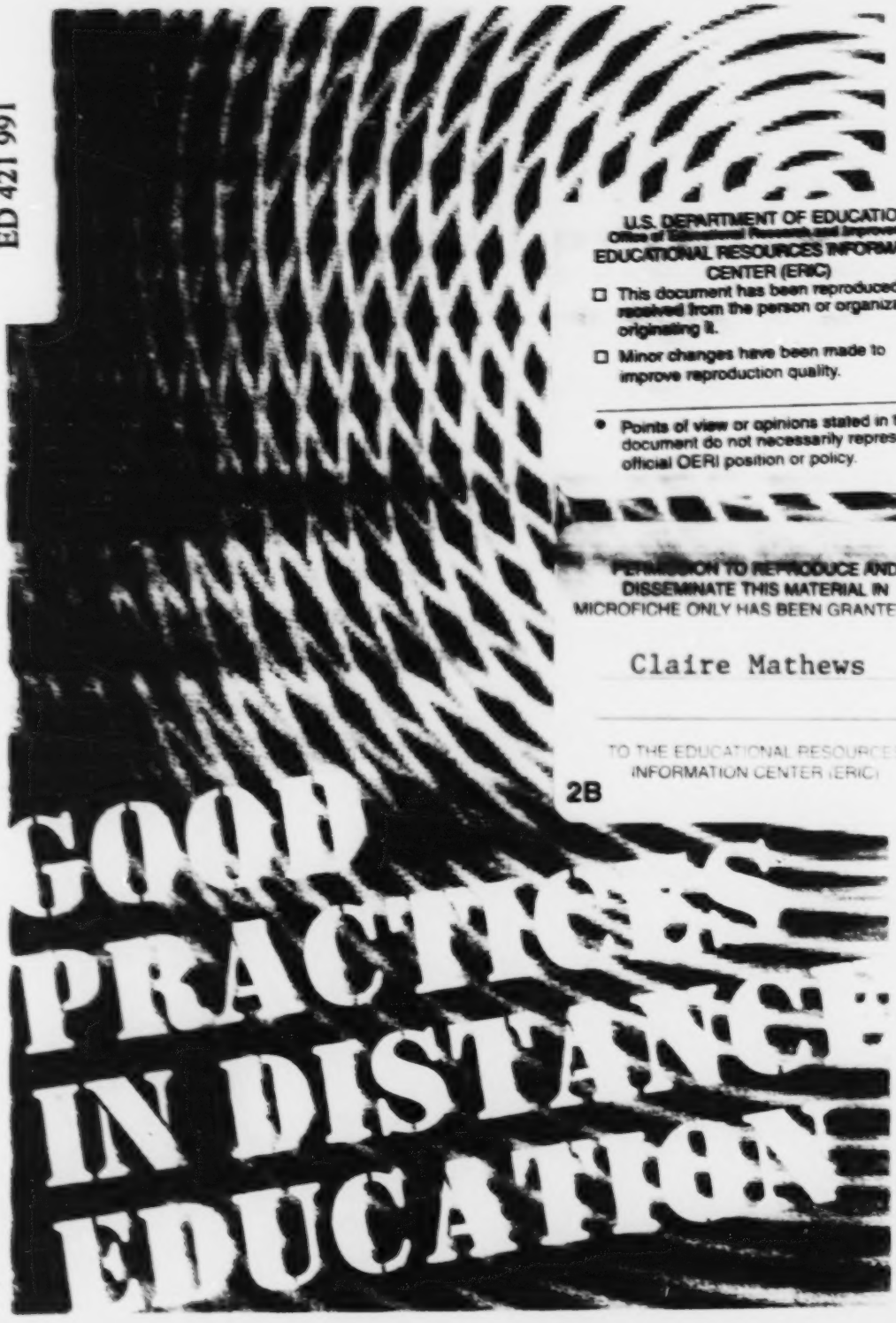

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GOOD PRACTICES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

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The Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications is a program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Its mission is to improve the efficiency, quality, and impact of educational telecommunications programs and systems. Through direct involvement of its member organizations, the Western Cooperative facilitates information and resource sharing, conducts evaluation and policy projects, and acts as an advocate for educational technology. Its membership represents state, education, and industry interests in educational telecommunications and distance education. Funding assistance is provided to the Western Cooperative by member dues and WICHE.

WICHE is a regional educational compact established by western states to promote and facilitate resource sharing, collaboration, and cooperative planning among those states and their colleges and universities. Member and affiliated states are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

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General information about WICHE and the Western Cooperative is also available on the World Wide Web at http://www.wiche.edu

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Introduction

Good Practices in Distance Education is a publication of a three-year project supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and conducted by the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications. The project, ***Balancing Quality and Access: Reducing State Policy Barriers to Electronically Delivered Higher Education Programs,*** is one of several national efforts to develop "standards" or "principles" for higher education programs delivered by means of educational technology. At the heart of the project are two questions: what does "quality" mean and how can it be addressed?

The quality question is being asked by a variety of interested parties, for up to now there has been little to guide the review of distance programs from any relevant perspective. That is, neither state agencies responsible for approving higher education programs, the accrediting community, institutions interested in developing programs for delivery at a distance, nor—most importantly—students themselves have had any way to judge the quality of distance education programs.

Students interested in pursuing their educational goals through a distance education program must have confidence that the faculty is competent, the program's use of technology is appropriate, and that they will have access to the learning resources and strong student services they will need. They must also be sure

that the institution offering the program will remain committed to providing resources for its continuation.

The Principles of Good Practice

The *Balancing Quality and Access* project developed an important framework to bolster learners' confidence in distance learning programs. After extensive reviews, discussions, and comments, the project achieved agreement among Western higher education leaders and the regional accrediting community on a set of "Principles of Good Practices for Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs." (The "Principles of Good Practice" are presented on the following pages.) In developing these Principles, the project broke new ground, creating for the first time a set of basic standards for reviewing distance education programs offered via technology. The Principles of Good Practice have been endorsed by a number of higher education governing and policymaking bodies in the West as well as by the regional accrediting community.

Designed to apply to a wide variety of institutional contexts, the Principles themselves consist of fairly broad statements. And, as the Preamble makes clear, the provider itself must determine its own strategy for adhering to the Principles of Good Practice. Specific "good practices" can take a variety of forms.

Good Practices: A Sample

This publication, *Good Practices in Distance Education*, looks at quality in distance education by illustrating the range of

approaches that can be taken to putting the Principles into practice. The programs highlighted here were nominated by the higher education agency in the states in which they are located as exemplifying good practices in distance education.

Higher education institutions' structures and practices are evolving rapidly to respond to distant learners' needs. Thus, this publication does not claim to feature the *best* distance learning programs in the West. Its aim is, instead, to highlight some programs in the region that are effectively implementing some or all of the Principles of Good Practice. Profiled here are a variety of institutions and programs: three are community colleges, one is a private institution, and the remainder are public universities that offer advanced degrees. The programs vary, as well, from associate of arts degrees, to bachelors completion programs, to graduate and professional degree programs.

Each section of the book focuses on one of the main headings of the Principles of Good Practice. Under each category are brief descriptions of how the highlighted programs and institutions are working to implement good practices. The descriptions have been selected and edited from materials provided by the featured programs.

Good Practices in Distance Education is designed to be helpful to a wide range of groups interested in the issue of quality in distance education, including:

- Prospective students
- Institutions wishing to implement their own version of "good practices"

- Accrediting and state regulatory agencies that need new tools for evaluating distance learning programs under their purview.

The Principles of Good Practice in Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs

PREAMBLE

These Principles are the product of a Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications project, *Balancing Quality and Access: Reducing State Policy Barriers to Electronically Delivered Higher Education Programs.* The three-year project, supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, is designed to foster an interstate environment that encourages the electronic provision of quality higher education programs across state lines. The Principles have been developed by a group representing the Western states' higher education regulating agencies, higher education institutions, and the regional accrediting community.

Recognizing that the context for learning in our society is undergoing profound changes, those charged with developing the Principles have tried not to tie them to or compare them to traditional campus structures. The Principles are also designed to be sufficiently flexible that institutions offering a range of programs—from graduate degrees to certificates—will find them useful.

Several assumptions form the basis for these Principles:

- The electronically offered program is provided by or through an institution that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body.
- The institution's programs holding specialized accreditation meet the same requirements when offered electronically.
- The "institution" may be a traditional higher education institution, a consortium of such institutions, or another type of organization or entity.
- These Principles address programs rather than individual courses.
- It is the institution's responsibility to review educational programs it provides via technology in terms of its own internally applied definitions of these Principles.

The Principles

Curriculum and Instruction

- Each program of study results in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree or certificate awarded.
- An electronically offered degree or certificate program is coherent and complete.
- The program provides for appropriate real-time or delayed interaction between faculty and students and among students.

- Qualified faculty provide appropriate oversight of the program electronically offered.

Institutional Context and Commitment

Role and Mission

- The program is consistent with the institution's role and mission.

- Review and approval processes ensure the appropriateness of the technology being used to meet the program's objectives.

Faculty Support

- The program provides faculty support services specifically related to teaching via an electronic system.

- The program provides training for faculty who teach via the use of technology.

Resources for Learning

- The program ensures that appropriate learning resources are available to students.

Students and Student Services

- The program provides students with clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, assumptions about technological competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, availability of academic support services and financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies.

- **Enrolled students have reasonable and adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support their learning.**

- **Accepted students have the background, knowledge, and technical skills needed to undertake the program.**

- **Advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials clearly and accurately represent the program and the services available.**

Commitment to Support

- Policies for faculty evaluation include appropriate consideration of teaching and scholarly activities related to electronically offered programs.

- **The institution demonstrates a commitment to ongoing support, both financial and technical, and to continuation of the program for a period sufficient to enable students to complete a degree/certificate.**

Evaluation and Assessment

- **The institution evaluates the program's educational effectiveness, including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student and faculty satisfaction. Students have access to such program evaluation data.**

- **The institution provides for assessment and documentation of student achievement in each course and at completion of the program.**

Descriptions of Featured Programs

INSTITUTION:	UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST
PROGRAM:	HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
LEVEL:	ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE
TECHNOLOGIES:	AUDIOCONFERENCE, AUDIOTAPE, VIDEOTAPE, COMPUTER

The University of Alaska, Southeast's Health Information Management (HIM) program was developed in the early 1990s, based on a needs assessment and the involvement of the Health Information Management professional community. Initially conceived as a program to be delivered only to the southeast region of Alaska, the distance-delivered program was soon delivered statewide. A consultant in HIM assisted with curriculum development, and full-time faculty initiated the program in the fall of 1992. The professional accrediting agency conducted a site visit in the fall of 1994, and the program has received the maximum accreditation period for a new program. It is also accredited through the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

The HIM Program participated in the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications' Western Brokering Project at WICHE. Through the Western Brokering Project at WICHE 29 students in Wyoming and New Mexico were accepted into the program, some of whom were concurrently enrolled in local

institutions. The plan for the future is to expand the program base to include students from other states.

Elements of the HIM program that have been particularly successful include the ability of students in remote, rural areas to access classes, and the involvement of the HIM professional community as clinical experience site supervisors, mentors, adjunct faculty, and supporters—both financially and professionally—of the HIM program. In addition, other University of Alaska Southeast faculty work across disciplines to reinforce HIM students' competencies (for example, in the departments of English, Anatomy & Physiology, and Computer Information Systems). Distance coordinators assist with registration, counseling, advising, and testing, and a variety of adjunct faculty and clinical sites are available to HIM students.

INSTITUTION:	UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
PROGRAM:	LIBRARY SCIENCE
LEVEL:	MASTER'S DEGREE
TECHNOLOGIES:	SATELLITE, TAPE, E-MAIL, INTERNET

The program was initiated after a period in which University of Arizona School of Library Science faculty were flown to Albuquerque each week to do live classes on the University of New Mexico campus. This practice led the School to investigate the opportunities available through new learning technologies, including satellite, tape, e-mail, and interactive on-line classrooms.

The program has grown from a small beginning to a program that now has students in 13 states and three foreign countries. The university is also working closely with the University of the Americas in Puebla, Mexico, to offer course work in both locations.

The cooperation the School and the University of Arizona have received from WICHE partners and the Western Cooperative's approval of the program were significant steps that allowed the program to grow at a critical time.

INSTITUTION:	BELLEVUE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON
PROGRAM:	ARTS AND SCIENCES TRANSFER DEGREE
LEVEL:	ASSOCIATE OF ARTS DEGREE
TECHNOLOGIES:	VIDEOTAPE, LIVE INTERACTIVE VIDEOCONFERENCING, SATELLITE

Bellevue Community College's (BCC) distance learning program began with one telecourse in 1977. The telecommunications program struggled for nearly a decade. With the beginning of the 1986/87 academic year, however, BCC began to take an entirely different approach to offering telecourses by directly involving division chairs, department chairs, and department faculty. As a result, telecourse enrollments have continued to increase over the years. In 1986-87, BCC served 505 students with 25 telecourses; in 1994/95, 1,647 students were enrolled in 55 telecourses.

BCC's Telecourse Program provides the opportunity for students to complete their entire Associate of Arts and Sciences

Degree solely via telecourses. Most BCC students simply take several telecourses in conjunction with traditional classes on campus. However, in 1994, the first students earned their AA degrees entirely through the Telecourse Program.

Oversight of the distance learning program is the responsibility of the Telecommunications Cabinet. This body is composed of technical and engineering personnel; they work directly with the faculty and department chairs who offer distance learning courses to determine which technologies will work best for them. The Telecommunications Cabinet makes recommendations for the purchase and use of various telecommunications technologies and reports to the Executive Dean of Educational Services, the President, and the Board of Trustees of the College.

Institution:	**California State University, Chico, California**
Program:	**Computer Science**
Level:	**Bachelor's and Master's Degree**
Technologies:	**Live and interactive satellite delivery and videotape**

California State University, Chico has been active in distance learning for a long time. CSU, Chico's extensive ITFS/Microwave system, which offers 50 courses per year to 15 regional learning centers in northern California, was started in 1975, and the satellite-delivered MS Degree in Computer Science was launched in 1984.

In 1981, at the request of Hewlett-Packard, CSU, Chico began broadcasting computer science classes via ITFS/microwave to their

site in Roseville, California. The program was very successful, and HP asked Chico to expand the delivery of computer science classes to other company locations in five western states: California, Colorado, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Thus, the satellite program was launched. Since 1984, CSU, Chico's Computer Science Program has grown rapidly. Not only has Hewlett-Packard added additional sites, but additional companies have also joined the program. At present, 23 companies in 17 states are participants.

In response to requests from several participating companies, CSU, Chico now also offers a bachelor's degree in computer science, live via satellite. Each semester, six computer science courses are offered. A five-year cycle of courses is established to allow the corporate employees to make long-range plans to earn a degree in computer science. In CSU, Chico's continuing effort to provide a broader range of courses, the university also offers courses via videotape. Five undergraduate computer science courses, which are also prerequisite courses for the master's degree, are now available to participating companies in videotaped format. The courses are self-paced and packaged conveniently for the student.

Institution:	**University of Hawaii**
Program:	**Nursing**
Level:	**Master's Degree**
Technologies:	**Interactive video and the Internet**

The University of Hawaii's Master of Science in Nursing Program began in the fall of 1990, arising from the need for advanced training of nursing personnel on the neighbor islands throughout the state of Hawaii. The program is designed to prepare nurses to function at an advanced level in a nursing specialty as a clinical nurse specialist, nurse practitioner, or nurse executive. The program permits students to select elective courses that prepare them for teaching, administration, or public health-related positions. The application of research methods in the examination of nursing problems is a major focus of the program. The master's program also provides the foundation for doctoral study.

The program consists of 36 credits, 21 credits completed via two-way video (HITS—Hawaii Interactive Television system) and 15 credits completed on site for the clinical practicum in the student's chosen specialty.

Institution:	**Oregon Health Sciences University**
Program:	**Nursing**
Level:	**Bachelor's Degree**
Technologies:	**Two way video, asynchronous conferencing**

The distance education outreach program for registered nurses seeking bachelor's degrees is offered by the Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) campuses at Southern Oregon State College in Ashland, Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls, Eastern Oregon State College in La Grande, and the OHSU in Portland. In addition, the OHSU School of Nursing campus in La Grande offers a baccalaureate program to place-bound students in the rural frontier delivery areas of Enterprise, Baker City, John Day, Burns and Lakeview. This program is offered using Oregon ED-Net II (two way audio-video) and asynchronous conferencing.

Students in the program receive the same courses as students on the originating campus. The baccalaureate program is fully accredited by the National League for Nursing, and the university is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

INSTITUTION:	THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
PROGRAM:	OFF-CAMPUS MBA PROGRAM
LEVEL:	MASTER'S DEGREE
TECHNOLOGIES:	TWO-WAY VIDEO

In the fall of 1988, The University of Montana School of Business Administration and Center for Continuing Education & Summer Programs initiated a Master's of Business Administration (MBA) Degree Program in Billings, Montana. Most classes were delivered by television with instruction originating on-campus in Missoula within the Film and TV Production Studio. Televised transmission to a classroom equipped with TV monitors in Billings was facilitated through microwave and other analog transmission methods. A two-way audio link was maintained between the sites.

Several years into the process, the University switched to compressed digital video transmission of its MBA courses. This change permitted two-way video signals between the campuses at The University of Montana in Missoula and the off-campus site in Billings on the MSU-Billings campus. With the fall semester 1994, the university added two additional sites to its compressed digital video MBA program—one in Butte and another in Kalispell.

The compressed digital video system works far better than the previous analog system. Instructors no longer need to be wired with a microphone, which restricted their movements at the originating site. Microphones now are placed in all classrooms, both on-campus and at the off-campus sites, so that student questions can be heard both by the instructor and by students at all sites linked

simultaneously with the originating classroom. When students at an off-campus site ask a question of the instructor, the camera switches to that location so that the instructor can see the student asking the question, as can students located at other off-campus sites.

Another technology that has proven particularly useful in delivering this instruction is the graphic camera, which takes the place of a traditional blackboard. This camera is used to project images from the originating classroom to off-campus sites so that the instructor can display charts, graphs, and other information. The graphic camera takes the place of a traditional blackboard.

INSTITUTION:	UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX
PROGRAM:	TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT
LEVEL:	MASTER'S IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
TECHNOLOGIES:	COMPUTER, MODEM, PHONE, FAX.

The Online campus of the University of Phoenix (UOP) offers full Master's and Bachelor's degree completion programs in business, management, information systems and technology. The establishment of the Online program in 1989 was an outgrowth of the University's mission to serve adult learners by providing a variety of academic options and opportunities. It was also a response to increased demand for innovative educational solutions in our emerging knowledge-based economy. Today there are over 1500 students participating in UOP's Online programs, and 200

1500 students participating in UOP's Online programs, and 200 faculty and staff are exclusively devoted to supporting them. The MBA online program in Technology Management was initiated in January 1995.

Initial research and development efforts focused on selecting technology that would preserve the interactive qualities of the adult learning model already employed in UOP's campus-based programs. It was equally important that the technology be commonly available among the population of working adults the university serves. Computer conferencing met both criteria, and also enabled an open environment whereby participants using virtually any kind of computer and modem could have access.

All communication in the UOP Online program is asynchronous and text-based. As with voice-mail or e-mail, the students or faculty use their computers and modems to send messages and to retrieve their responses at a later time. In contrast to voice-mail or e-mail, however, communication is many-to-many rather than one-to-one. While private messages between individuals can be accommodated, most communications are sent to a group forum for all to view and provide comment. Classes are limited to 12 students because of their focus on class discussion.

INSTITUTION:	RED ROCKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LAKEWOOD, COLORADO
PROGRAM:	A+ DEGREE PROGRAM
LEVEL:	ASSOCIATE OF ARTS
TECHNOLOGIES:	INTERACTIVE VIDEO, TELECOURSES

Red Rocks Community College's A+ Degree program offers courses required for a student to complete 34 credits of core curriculum requirements and additional courses to fulfill 26 credits of approved electives. In addition, several courses are offered to prepare students for the core requirements. The course offerings are provided over six semesters on a rotating basis, allowing students to begin at any time.

The A+ Degree Program represents a synergy among existing learning options—interactive video, self-paced courses, telecourses, and off-campus courses—which allows students to complete an Associate of Arts Degree in two years or less without being required to come to the main campus. The individual programs have been successful for students for many years. Bringing them together offers additional opportunities for students to succeed.

Interactive video courses provide real-time, two-way audio/two-way video interaction among faculty and students at four sites. Telecourses and self-paced courses offer face-to-face and/or phone interaction between instructors and students. All learning options are directed by full-time or adjunct faculty and full-time technical/professional instructors.

Institution:	**Utah State University**
Program:	**School Counseling**
Level:	**Master's Degree and Certification Program**
Technologies:	**EDNET—two-way video**

The preparation of school counselors was a significant part of Utah State University's Department of Psychology's mission during the late 1950s and into the early '70s. In the early 1970s the Board of Regents assigned roles to the various institutions of higher education in the state, eliminating USU's program for the preparation of school counselors. In the late 1980s, in response to an ever-growing need for school counselors, the Department of Psychology again sought and was given permission to prepare school counselors once again. Since then, the department has initiated a program that fully meets the standards of the State Board of Education for certification and also meets the requirements for a Masters degree in psychology. In an attempt to meet the critical need for certified counselors with available resources, the department developed outreach programs in addition to the full-time on-campus program. These outreach programs include a summer program, an on-site extension program, and the EDNET program.

The EDNET program was developed to meet the need for certified counselors throughout the state, especially in remote, sparsely populated areas. Students wishing to complete the program were required to meet all requirements of the on-campus program, including applying for and being admitted to graduate school in the school counseling program.

Students take courses at 14 sites around the state. They come from a wide geographic area around each of these sites; some travel over two hours each way to attend class. In addition, students from Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, and Wyoming are enrolled in the program. Four of the courses in the program require on-site supervision and mentoring as well as presentations over the EDNET system.

The program has provided an important service to the public schools in the state by training well-qualified counselors. There are now counselors in areas of the state, such as Wayne County, Enterprise, Moab, and Montezuma Creek, where there have been no counselors in the past. The program has also helped provide excellent counselors in sites along the Wasatch Front where there were previously significant shortages.

INSTITUTION:	WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
PROGRAM:	THE EXTENDED DEGREE PROGRAM
LEVEL:	BACHELOR'S DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM
TECHNOLOGIES:	VIDEO, CABLE, SATELLITE, COMPUTER, E-MAIL

The Washington State University's Extended Degree Program (EDP) was initiated in the fall of 1992 to provide access to upper division higher education for residents of rural Washington. Utilizing a variety of telecommunications technologies, the program delivers courses leading to a Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences. Students may select course concentration areas from a number of

academic disciplines, including psychology, sociology, criminal justice, political science, history, and anthropology. Opportunities for interaction between faculty members and students, and among students, are built into each course.

The program is designed primarily for adult learners who are unable to leave their communities because of professional and/or family responsibilities. The average age of participants has been 37 years; a majority have been women. While the initial focus of the program was to serve rural communities in Washington, Washington State University (WSU) has since received authorization from the state's Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer the program statewide. From its inception, the program has been available nationwide through courses broadcast over Mind Extension University, an educational satellite network. During the first semester the program served just 50 students; in the fall of 1995, over 400 students were enrolled and pursuing a degree.

Two areas of the program that consistently receive strong positive evaluations from participants are the academic quality of courses and the high level of student services provided. All EDP courses are developed by WSU faculty and must meet the same quality standards as courses offered in a more traditional format on campus. Recognizing the potential for distance learning students to feel disconnected from both the process and the institution, program staff are trained to be responsive, attentive, and inventive when dealing with the needs of students.

INSTITUTION:	UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
PROGRAM:	SOCIAL SCIENCE
LEVEL:	BACHELOR'S DEGREE
TECHNOLOGIES:	AUDIO CONFERENCING, VIDEO TAPES, COMPRESSED VIDEO

The University of Wyoming's undergraduate Social Science program is tailored to students wishing to develop an individualized course of study. Using a multi-disciplinary approach, the social science degree program allows students flexibility in selecting courses from a variety of areas. Although the program was first developed to meet the needs of on-campus students, it was a natural degree program to offer off-campus students.

To facilitate the delivery of the social science degree off-campus, the University of Wyoming has completed cooperative agreements with all seven Wyoming community colleges. The agreements specify that the community colleges will deliver the appropriate lower division courses for this degree program, and the University will deliver the upper division course work.

GOOD PRACTICES IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

"Each program of study results in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree or certificate awarded."

"An electronically offered degree or certificate program is coherent and complete."

- At **Washington State University**, the outcomes anticipated for an interdisciplinary liberal arts degree are that students will gain content knowledge, increase their analytical and critical thinking abilities, and be capable of integrating a variety of perspectives into their understanding of the world. These outcomes are expected for both on-campus and EDP students. Since the program began, EDP students have equaled or surpassed their on-campus counterparts in all measures of achievement. To complete the degree, students design individual curricula according to their own interests within major and minor areas of concentration. With the assistance of an academic advisor, each student develops a coherent program of study leading to graduation.

- By **University of Wyoming** regulation, all off-campus courses must meet the same academic standards, both in terms of faculty and course content, as on-campus courses. To insure these academic standards, all off-campus courses must be approved by the appropriate department and academic college.

- The number of courses required for the **University of Phoenix's MBA degree**, the sequencing of those courses, course prerequisites, length and content are the same as other University of Phoenix courses except that oral presentation skills have been removed as a program objective. With this one exception, the objectives and outcomes are the same. A detailed curriculum guide and textbooks for each Online course are mailed to the student before class begins. Curriculum guidelines list course goals, course structure, objectives, outcomes, and assignments. Current readings and hand-outs for the course are also included in the guide.

- The **University of Alaska Southeast's Health Information Management** program incorporates national competencies, developed through a Roles & Function Study, into its curriculum. Program integrity is maintained through the use of faculty who are qualified to teach in the discipline. Courses offered in the first year provide the foundation for later courses, and learning is reinforced through scheduled clinical experiences.

- The distance-delivered program offered by the **University of Arizona's School of Library Science** is the same as the program offered on campus. The School of Library Science and the Graduate College of the University of Arizona assure the quality and rigor of the program. The student earns the same degree as an on-campus student. The University of Arizona does not indicate on student transcripts how or where the degree was earned.

- The value of any pre-produced telecourse is determined by **Bellevue Community College's** Telecourse/Teleconference **Office, and the Director then meets with the appropriate** department chair and provides the information for his/her review. If the department is interested in offering the telecourse, the course is then evaluated against a traditional course. The department chair and instructor are responsible for ensuring course equivalency for the telecourse. To ensure equivalency and meet the college-approved course content **and learning objectives of the course, an instructor may have** to produce additional lectures on video tape or provide supplemental print materials.

- At **Cal State, Chico,** learning outcomes from interactive video courses, self-paced courses, telecourses, and off-campus courses are identical to the outcomes of the corresponding on-campus lecture/discussion courses. In addition, the four learning options give students choices that allow them to fit their individual learning and life styles.

- The development of the **University of Hawaii School of Nursing Program's** curriculum and instruction began several years prior to the beginning of the program. It involved the review of all courses, including evaluating the appropriateness of courses for interactive television delivery, the sequencing of the courses, training for faculty, and appropriate academic advising.

- Students in the **Oregon Health Sciences Nursing Program** receive the same courses as students on the originating campus. The baccalaureate program is fully accredited by the National League for Nursing, and the university is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

- As students enrolled in **The University of Montana's off-campus MBA Program** are linked with on-campus MBA students attending night classes, this electronically offered academic degree program results in learning outcomes identical to those of the program offered on campus in Missoula. The University of Montana's MBA Program is accredited by the American Assembly School of Collegiate Schools of Business (ASSCSB), and all aspects of the off-campus program adhere to the same curriculum and instruction standards adhered to on campus.

"The program provides for appropriate real-time or delayed interaction between faculty and students and among students."

"Qualified faculty provide appropriate oversight of the program electronically offered."

- One of the most successful elements in **Washington State University's Extended Degree Program** (EDP) courses has been technology-assisted interaction. Program assessment has established that providing distance students with opportunities to interact with professors and with each other is essential to quality education, and it is important to provide several different ways in which this interaction can occur. A sophisticated voice mail system (VMX), accessible via a toll-free telephone call, allows students to send and receive comments from both the EDP office and faculty and to exchange views with other students. The EDP office and a growing number of faculty members can be reached via computer e-mail. The program has also established publicly-accessible computer stations in several communities.

- The **University of Montana** staffs its off-campus MBA Program with the same faculty that teach in the on-campus program. This means that only full-time, tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees in their respective fields are assigned to teach in the program.

- **Bellevue Community College's** telecourses are generally taught by tenured faculty who wish to teach an extra course. The Telecommunications Program insists that all programming be of high quality and that only qualified faculty teach these courses. In order to forestall problems, the program directly involves the division chair, the department chair, and the faculty member. Additionally, periodic evaluation of faculty ensures that high standards are maintained.

- The **University of Hawaii's Nursing Program** is offered on a "real-time" basis, with the main origination site at UH-Manoa and groups of students at Kauai Community College, Maui Community College, and UH-Hilo. Since the delivery system is two-way video, the instructor can teach from the three receiving sites at least once each semester. This allows for additional advising to occur on site. In addition, e-mail is used for all courses.

- At the **Oregon Health Sciences University**, classes are taught by faculty members of the School of Nursing who are fully qualified to teach the courses. All faculty have voice mail, and students are encouraged to call them with questions and concerns. In addition, faculty often call students to ask how the class is going for them. Students may also communicate with faculty via fax. Asynchronous conferencing is used by some faculty who teach courses that lend themselves to small group discussions. The faculty set up discussion groups for students and encourage them to converse with the instructor on line.

- The faculty who teach in the **University of Arizona's Library Science** program are all either regular faculty or are adjunct faculty who have been approved to teach on-campus first. All students have access to e-mail, an 800 telephone number, fax machines, and a range of Telnet capabilities. Interaction in the program between faculty and students in the program is expected and demanded; it is both real time and delayed, to allow maximum flexibility.

- The **University of Montana's electronically offered MBA Program** provides for real-time interaction between faculty and students and among students at various off-campus sites. The university supports its instructors and students by providing toll-free telephone access from off-campus sites to the campus in Missoula. Students are encouraged to contact faculty members during scheduled office hours by telephone. Occasionally, an interactive TV link is made for individual students with faculty members, especially when an off-campus student is defending a thesis.

- The **University of Phoenix's** online classes are highly structured and faculty-guided rather than self-paced. Faculty who teach online participate equally in faculty governance, and have collective control over all decisions made about Online course content, instructional design, and materials selection.

- **Because Utah State University's School Counseling Program** is offered on two-way interactive television, the opportunity for interaction between faculty and students is available in real time. The program also makes use of fax, e-mail, regular mail, and telephone for faculty-student interaction and student-to-student interaction across sites.

5 GOOD PRACTICES IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT: Role and Mission

"The program is consistent with the institution's role and mission."

"Review and approval processes ensure the appropriateness of the technology being used to meet the program's objectives."

- As the only public graduate program in the state of Hawaii, **University of Hawaii-Manoa** has a mission to provide graduate education to all qualified residents. Until the advent of telecommunications, students had to relocate to Oahu to pursue their graduate work.

- The advent of Oregon Ed-Net enabled the **OHSU School of Nursing** to respond to the 1985 recommendations of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education to:

  - Increase the number of state system baccalaureate nursing graduates each year.
  - Increase the number of clinical sites at which baccalaureate courses were offered.

- Modify state system baccalaureate nursing curricula to facilitate the matriculation of registered nurses seeking baccalaureate education.

- The **Health Information Management** program is consistent with University of Alaska Southeast's (UAS) mission to provide students access to a variety of academic and vocational programs. The HIM program also incorporates the university's mission of serving the broadest possible array of students by blending traditional academic and community-based educational philosophies, providing quality instruction, and striking a balance between theory and application. Review and approval processes, both internal and external, ensure the appropriateness of electronic delivery to meet the program's objectives.

- There is a close correlation between the mission and goals of **Bellevue Community College's Telecommunications Program** and the mission and goals of the College. During Spring Quarter 1995, Bellevue Community College completed its ten-year accreditation review. The accreditation report affirmed that the Telecommunications Program was in accord with the institution's role and mission.

Washington State University has a long history of providing high quality educational opportunities for students. Through such services as Cooperative Extension, the university has been serving the needs of communities across the state for over 75 years. In recent years, as the university faced the twin pressures of declining state support and increasing expectations from traditional and emerging constituencies, it became clear that new strategies were needed to meet those expectations.

The university responded by developing branch campuses in three urban communities and by creating the Washington Higher Education Telecommunication System, a live, interactive, microwave-based course delivery system linking all the campuses, and, in 1992, the Extended Degree Program. The success of the Extended Degree Program has had a profound impact on the institution and on critical policy issues in Washington. Once regarded as a program of marginal importance, the EDP is now seen as the centerpiece of WSU's efforts to become a model land-grant university for the 21st century. The use of proven distance learning technologies allows the university to meet the needs of both traditional and emerging constituencies at a time when providing access to higher education has never been more urgent.

To support and to give concrete form to WSU's efforts at expanding access to higher education in Washington, the university has created the division of Extended University Affairs that includes, among other units, Cooperative Extension, Radio and Television Services, and Extended University Services.

- The **University of Montana's** off-campus MBA program is consistent with the institution's role and mission, which includes a commitment to excellence in innovative experiential learning and personal growth through research and service. The program is operated as a partnership between the School of Business Administration and the Center for Continuing Education and Summer Programs at the University of Montana. The Department of Extended Studies and Summer Programs within the Center for Continuing Education has a mission of offering credit programs using delivery methods that include electronically offered academic degree programs. When offered off-campus, these programs are designed to meet the educational needs of individuals who cannot otherwise access traditional University offerings.

- The **University of Wyoming** is the only four-year institution in the state and is responsible for the delivery of upper division and graduate courses throughout Wyoming. This role is reflected as part of the university's mission "to provide superior outreach and extension for Wyoming."

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- Its Online program complements the University of Phoenix mission because it aids in achieving the institution's purposes: (a) To identify the educational needs of adult populations whose access to higher education is restricted or non-existent and (b) To develop educational programs and curricula that will meet the professional needs of working adults, will assist them in advancing their career goals, and are consonant with the resources of the university.

  The review and approval process for ensuring that the technology being used is appropriate to meet program objectives occurs on two levels. First, it is embedded in the faculty governance structure, where assistant department chairs and faculty curriculum coordinators are appointed specifically to represent the Online programs. Second, the Online programs were established under a separate operating unit, or "branch campus," and thus have management, staff, academic, and financial resources devoted solely to its ongoing support.

- Utah State University's School Counseling program has been approved by the State Board of Regents. It is consistent with the missions of Utah State University, the College of Education, and the Department of Psychology. The university has reviewed the appropriateness of the technology being used and determined that the courses could be offered with the same quality and rigor as on-campus courses if they were supplemented by four courses that include on-site mentors.

6 GOOD PRACTICES IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT: Faculty Support

"The program provides faculty support services specifically related to teaching via an electronic system."

"The program provides training for faculty who teach via technology."

- **Red Rocks Community College** in Colorado makes available the following support services to faculty who teach on the interactive video system:
  - An instructional designer who provides support for curriculum adaptation for telecommunicated delivery;
  - A multi-media developer who assists in the creation of visual presentations;
  - A technician who oversees the maintenance and technical operations of telecommunications activities;
  - Facilitators who initiate activities at remote locations;
  - A distance education coordinator who oversees the functions of all telecommunications activities;

- A courier service that delivers materials to remote sites in a timely manner;
- Clerical support (word processing, printing) and mailing services; and
- Twenty-four hours of intensive training on curriculum adaptations for distance delivery; learner characteristics, how to write measurable objectives, questioning strategies, Bloom's Taxonomy, interactive teaching/learning strategies, use of video conferencing equipment, presentation skills, and graphics and visual preparation.

- Faculty teaching in the **University of Hawaii's Master's in Nursing Program** offered via HITS have access to extensive faculty support. Group sessions covering eight hours of a faculty development curriculum and individual sessions are provided. In addition, grant funding provides one-course release time for faculty to prepare for teaching via HITS and includes graphic and instructional design support.

- **Bellevue Community College** provides support services to faculty teaching a taped telecourse, a locally produced taped telecourse, or a live-interactive telecourse:
  - *For a pre-produced telecourse.* If a faculty member is interested in offering a pre-produced telecourse, the Director of Telecourses/Teleconferencing works closely with the instructor. The program also provides

development grants for faculty to ensure that the telecourse meets the course content and learning objectives established by the department and the college.

- *For a live interactive telecourse.* Substantial assistance is provided to a faculty member who wants to develop and offer his/her own live interactive telecourse. Development grants are available, and faculty may receive release time for developing such courses. The Director of Telecourses/Teleconferencing, the Director of Television Services, and production students work closely with the instructor for several months before actual production begins. The instructor also receives training on how best to present him/herself before the camera. Substantial pre-production and script writing are completed prior to actual production, and production "dry runs" are held on a regular basis and analyzed for needed improvements.

- **Cal State, Chico,** conducts orientation sessions each semester for faculty teaching in the satellite-delivered Computer Science Program. These sessions are held in the origination classroom, and faculty have an opportunity to learn about the classroom, including how the microphones work, the best ways to move about the classroom, and how to talk to the camera when addressing someone off-campus.

The satellite-delivered Computer Science Program is a high-priority program at CSU, Chico. The instructional part of the program is handled by the Computer Science Department, which schedules the classes, chooses the faculty, and advises students. The instructional design aspect of the program and faculty training are handled by the Instructional Media Center, which also maintains and operates the satellite equipment and the origination classroom. Administrative support and overall program coordination are the responsibility of the Center for Regional and Continuing Education (RCE); most contact with the campus comes through this coordinating role. As the major outreach organization of the University, RCE has been managing distance education programs for more than 20 years and understands the differences in the needs of non-traditional students. Through this division of labor, each area on campus does what it does best, and this approach has been fundamental to the success of the program.

- All University of Phoenix faculty are required to participate in an assessment and training program prior to teaching online. The assessment is conducted via telephone, through credential review, and online, with academic administrators and faculty peers. The faculty training program is a comprehensive eight-week course conducted entirely online. It covers the essential elements of teaching interactive courses

in a computer mediated environment, online facilitation techniques, technical training, administrative requirements and policies, and instructional issues.

Once the training is complete, new faculty observe an online course in progress and are assigned a mentor to observe the progress of the first class they teach, provide them with feedback, answer questions, and act as a positive resource. Faculty seminars are offered on line on communication techniques, grading and assessment, and adult learning theories.

- **The University of Alaska, Southeast** provides a distance coordinator based at the Sitka campus to work with a network of on-site coordinators throughout the delivery system. In addition, the Health Information Management program director and adjunct faculty hold meetings prior to and at the end of each semester. These sessions provide an opportunity for faculty to share ideas and challenges and make suggestions for the future.

- Faculty teaching in the **University of Arizona School of Library Science** program receive teaching assistance. In addition, technical assistance with technologies is available through VideoCampus, a part of the University's service organization for delivery of extension courses. Training is offered by VideoCampus every semester.

- The **University of Wyoming's** off-campus program supports faculty with three instructional designers on the university staff. Training sessions are provided every semester for faculty who teach via technology. In addition, instructional designers provide on-going coaching for faculty throughout the semester as well as formative and summative course evaluations.

- The **University of Montana's** off-campus MBA program provides a variety of faculty support services including trained technicians to operate the system at all sites and, on request, specialized equipment to accommodate an individual faculty member's requirements. In addition, printed manuals describe the use of the graphic camera and provide guidelines for assembling materials to display using the graphic camera. Video-taped footage of instructors who have taught with the system are available for new faculty to review in preparation for using the technology, and instructors new to the system are invited to attend lectures given by faculty using the system both at the on-campus originating site in Missoula and at off-campus locations.

  Proctors also are assigned to faculty so that examinations may be given and assignment material handed out in advance of lectures. The university maintains personnel at all off-campus sites to assist instructors with placing materials on reserve at various libraries, to register students, and to handle

other matters. The university coordinates the purchase of textbooks with the various bookstores at the off-campus sites and, on occasion, also arranges access to computer labs at these sites.

- Providing ongoing faculty development opportunities for instructors involved with **Washington State University's Extended Degree Program** is a high priority for program administrators. EDP staff and faculty have conducted a series of faculty development workshops on improving student learning through technology applications. Recently, EDP initiated a new faculty development newsletter with literature reviews, teaching tips, research results, program updates, and feedback from students. The newsletter provides an additional way to share useful information in a flexible format for faculty. The permanent, full-time Faculty and Student Support Coordinator provides faculty with a consistent point of contact with the program.

GOOD PRACTICES IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT: Resources for Learning

"The program ensures that appropriate learning resources are available to students."

- CSU, Chico students have access to Chico's on-line catalog via computer modem and can order books from the library on the phone. They can also conduct on-line database searches by connecting through the university library. At CSU, Chico the catalog of the university's entire library collection, more than one million items, is in machine-readable format accessible via computer terminal. The electronic catalog is used by students throughout the region and by corporate employees throughout the United States who are enrolled in the BS and MS Computer Science degree programs.

- The University of Hawaii's Nursing Program arranges library and academic computing support at each receive site. Library support includes purchase of duplicate materials, on-line access to the main library at UH-Manoa, and the availability of inter-library loan staff for mailing materials to students. In 1993, the program implemented on-line access to Nursing CD-ROM databases and the licensing of specific

nursing journals for on-line access. Computing support also includes providing each student with an e-mail account and appropriate training, the availability of computing labs at non-traditional hours, and dial-up modem access.

- The **University of Arizona's School of Library Science** makes a concerted effort to supply materials to individual distance learners. Significant time is spent in arranging local resources for the individual student at distant sites. The School is able to offer the prospective student, as well as the student already enrolled, access to a Web site, an interactive on-line classroom and seminar environment in which prospective students are encouraged to see the school's curriculum in real time. There are links to the University of Arizona Web site and the sites of other academic and support units. This electronic access is supplemented with an information packet sent to all prospective students, which summarizes the services, financial requirements and assistance, and technical requirements for the program.

- **Bellevue Community College's Telecommunications Program** provides a number of access avenues for distance learning students. Programs are cablecast on a pre-determined schedule, with each episode playing several times during the week. Videotapes are available for rental, and students may check out sets through the library media center. Students also have access to other college resources such as the writing, reading, math, and computer labs, and counseling,

financial aid, and career counseling/job placement. Students are offered the opportunity to attend class in person a minimum of once a week to review the material being covered on the cablecast and in the textbook.

- The **University of Montana**'s electronically delivered MBA program provides a variety of resources to students. Students are assigned an account number with the Mansfield Library at Missoula and are linked to the library through the Internet to support their research assignments. In addition, the university has made arrangements with local computer centers at each off-campus location to support courses requiring micro-computer lab access. Specialized software has been installed at all off-campus locations whenever assignments require such software.

- The **University of Phoenix** Academic Information Service provides assistance in the use of various learning resources including proper methods for research; computerized searches of the literature, and assistance in procuring materials through electronic databases, interlibrary loans, government archives, news services, or other sources. In addition, UOP has a "virtual" library available via the World Wide Web, which allows students free access to more than 2,000 indexes.

- In an effort to ensure that Extended Degree Program students have access to course videos, **Washington State University** has established collaborative relationships with community

colleges, Cooperative Extension offices, public libraries, public schools, local cable television companies, and other groups who assist the program on the local level. Because communities recognize the importance of education, this support has been a hallmark of the EDP since its inception. Visits to the program sites by EDP advisers and the Community Outreach Coordinator sustain these relationships, in addition to providing personal contact with students. Students can access campus-based resources, including the WSU library system, academic advising, the admissions and financial aid offices and the bookstore, with a toll-free telephone call or an e-mail message to the EDP office.

- The **University of Wyoming** library provides substantial support for off-campus courses. The library has established a Library Outreach Office that offers a number of services especially for distant students. These services include access to reserve materials, reference services, on-line database searches, and bibliographic instruction.

GOOD PRACTICES IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT: Students and Student Services

"The program provides students with clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, assumptions about technological competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, availability of academic support services and financial aid resources, and costs and payments policies."

"Enrolled students have reasonable and adequate access to the range of students services appropriate to support their learning."

"Accepted students have the background, knowledge, and technical skills needed to undertake the program."

"Advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials clearly and accurately represent the program and the services available."

- CSU, Chico students are provided the following materials prior to the beginning of each semester:

- Course schedule and course descriptions for the next semester's courses;
- Printed course syllabus for each course being offered;
- Five year course schedule for long-range academic planning ;
- Calendar of important dates for each semester;
- Office hours, phone numbers and e-mail addresses for each semester's faculty;
- Reprint of the Computer Science Department catalog pages;
- Book order form to order their books directly from the student bookstore;
- Policies and procedures page covering enrollment procedures how to add/drop/order books, etc.;
- Brochure covering all aspects of the videotape classes;
- Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science Brochure;
- Master's Degree in Computer Science Brochure;
- Registration cards and instructions;
- Guide to Library Services for Satellite Students.

All materials about the program are also available via the World Wide Web.

In addition, undergraduate and graduate advisers provide on-site advising. When a new site joins the program, a team from Chico visits the site. This team—usually an administrative and an academic

representative—meets with all interested site personnel. They provide a general orientation to the program and hold individual advising sessions with interested students.

College advisors work with students to clarify course and degree requirements, transfer options, financial aid, academic support services, costs, and payment policies. Student orientations for interactive video courses, telecourses and self-paced courses address curriculum, faculty-student interaction, and technological competencies.

- **Red Rocks Community College's** A+ Degree program students have access to:
  - Application forms and process by mail, fax, or phone;
  - Assessment testing on campus or at five off-campus sites;
  - Advising on campus, over the interactive video network, or at five off-campus sites;
  - Credit for Prior Learning (CLEP portfolio and challenge examinations);
  - Financial aid information over the interactive video network;
  - Registration through the STAR (touch-tone telephone) system or at five off-campus sites;
  - Bookstore services via UPS or at two off-campus sites;

- Career planning and job placement assistance over the interactive video network;

  Assessment and study skills offerings help students succeed in the program. Informational brochures for students outline the A+ Degree program. The program matrix helps students and their advisors outline a two-year course of study.

- **University of Hawaii's Nursing Program** offers a review course in statistics and research in the summer prior to the beginning of the program to help students prepare for graduate work. Informational sessions, brochures, and advertisements are used to recruit students. The student services group of the School of Nursing visits each site to provide on-site information and counseling sessions.

- **Bellevue Community College's** quarterly schedule includes a separate telecourse section that cross-lists each telecourse under each department. A telecourse brochure is also mailed to past and potential telecourse students and to community members who ask to be placed on the current mailing list. The Director of Telecourses/Teleconferencing is a member of the college's student advising cadre and is familiar with all facets of transfer information.

  At the beginning of each quarter, students meet with instructors to receive course syllabi, outlines, and other materials. A representative from the telecourse office meets with each class to discuss distance learning, school policies,

and other related issues. Prerequisites, pre-testing, and competency assessments are monitored by the respective academic department offering the telecourse, as they are for traditional classes. Admissions, tuition, and student counseling are the same as for on-campus students. Students may access the services either in person or by telephone. The Telecourse Office has both day and evening hours to accommodate students who have varied work hours.

Telecourse credits transfer to four-year institutions in the same way as traditional classes. There is no distinction made on a student transcript as to whether a course was taken as a telecourse or in a traditional classroom.

- **Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing** faculty provide students with an enhanced syllabus that includes information not only about the course but also about how to access the faculty member and support services needed for the course. The Office of Student Affairs provides financial aid resources and all other support students may need. Students admitted to the outreach programs must meet the admission criteria for on-campus students. Recruitment materials include all information about the programs that students need and, once admitted, students receive a student's handbook that describes policies.

- As the University of Montana's off-campus MBA program is structured as a part-time program for the benefit of persons employed full-time in cities some distance from Missoula, the program regularly publishes a schedule of future courses. As students enroll, material is provided to outline the curriculum, specific degree requirements, and the nature of faculty-student interaction.

  In advertising and promoting its off-campus degree program, the university uses local newspaper advertisements and relies on occasional presentations before civic organizations. Packets that include the university's graduate catalog, GMAT bulletin, and other materials that describe the program in detail and answer the questions most often asked about the program are mailed in response to inquiries.

- The University of Alaska Health Information Management program sends potential students a letter, summary of courses, advising sheet, financial aid information, telecommunications delivery information, and a brochure describing the program. Enrolled students receive the HIM Distance Handbook, HIM Student Clinical Handbook, syllabus, video and audiotapes, an Access Survey, and information about the computer network. The syllabus describes the course objectives, the evaluation process, and the competencies addressed.

Students are also given a University of Alaska, Sitka catalog that describes the University's mission, grading, and appeal processes, and a schedule of courses, and information on drop/add, fees, and graduation. A program update is sent to all enrolled students at the end of each semester, indicating the courses to be offered in the next semester and providing news of fellow students and the program.

Through advising sessions with a counselor and/or program director, toll-free telephone access plus electronic mail, students are directed into the appropriate level of courses needed to support their entry into HIM courses. Advising and counseling are provided on an ongoing basis, based on student need. Students can now access a Mentoring Network through which they are matched with a HIM professional. The purpose of the network is to give students additional insights and perspectives on the profession, its future, and potential career paths.

Students are also asked to complete an Introduction Sheet, providing personal information they wish to share with class members. Since students do not have a visual reference, this information personalizes the voices on the phone.

Off-campus students receive excellent service from the University of Wyoming's Students Service office. For example, off-campus students participate fully in access to university financial aid. Through cooperative agreements

with the community colleges, students are able to enroll simultaneously in community college and UW courses and to use these courses to count toward their full-time enrollment. The university has also begun sharing information electronically with the community colleges so that financial aid students can be easily tracked.

A full-time academic advisor is available to off-campus students in this program. Not only can she be reached via a 1-800 number, she also makes several trips throughout the state each year to meet face-to-face with students. In addition, the social science program is advertised every semester through a statewide brochure.

- Prior to being admitted to the University of Phoenix's Online program, students are counseled by an enrollment advisor who helps them determine if they have the academic background and professional experience to meet the admission requirements. Students must also have a computer and modem and the ability to use it. Students are counseled to understand that it requires self-motivation and commitment to devote 15-20 hours per week to their course of study. The average amount of time UOP Online students spend on the phone with an enrollment advisor prior to beginning their program is three hours, which is generally spread over a period of about one to three months.

Students also receive a wide variety of written materials, which explain program and admissions details, tuition, books and fees, technical and proctoring requirements, program resources, and support services. Catalogs, program handbooks, and course guides offer additional detail about program and course outcomes and objectives, policies and procedures, learning resources, and other information.

Before beginning their program, students participate in an Online technical orientation session in order to get comfortable with the technology. They log on to the system, practice sending and receiving files, obtain specific information about their upcoming course, and become familiar with the computer conferencing features. UOP employs a technical support staff to handle student and faculty "technical help" calls 20 hours a day, six days a week.

When students inquire about Utah State University's School Counseling program, they are sent a packet of information that describes the program, explains admission standards and procedures, presents degree and certification requirements, and tells them how they can apply for other services related to being a student at Utah State University.

The admission standards for the ED NET program are the same as those for the on-campus program. The only exception is that students have been allowed to take the first two quarters of course work before they are required to have completed the admission process.

- Students in a distance learning program are in special need of strong support in student services, and **Washington State University** has emphasized this aspect of the program from the beginning. Following are some efforts being made to meet student needs:

  - A student handbook outlining curriculum, program requirements, opportunities for interaction, financial aid and admissions procedures, and other relevant information is provided to all students.
  - A student directory is published and sent to all students each semester.
  - An admissions packet, which includes application materials and a registration checklist, is available to prospective students.
  - A financial aid application checklist has been developed.
  - WSU has worked cooperatively with other schools to coordinate financial aid awards for the growing number of EDP students attending more than one higher education institution during a given semester.
  - " program assistant to the Assistant Director of Admissions was hired to facilitate the admissions process for off-campus students.

- An assistant to the Branch Campus and Off-campus Coordinator of Financial Aid works directly with EDP students and assists the coordinator in day-to-day operations.

Strong support in academic advising has proven to be one of the most important services provided to the extended degree students. All students interested in admission to the Extended Degree Program are referred to an adviser who discusses with them their previous academic backgrounds and how they might incorporate this previous work into the degree completion program. Advisers use a variety of tools to help make services to students more effective:

- They develop program plans for each student and update the plans each semester so students have a clear record of their progress towards a degree.
- They have access to both the WSU centralized administrative databases and EDP student record systems from their desktop computers and can review students' progress on a regular basis or provide students with current information.
- Advisers make personal visits to program sites each semester, in addition to advising students via the telephone.

- Advisers assist students in all aspects of their academic careers, including providing information regarding university services such as career placement, helping arrange for internships or work study, and discussing graduate program requirements

GOOD PRACTICES IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT: Commitment to Support

"Policies for faculty evaluation include appropriate consideration of teaching and scholarly activities related to electronically offered programs."

"The institution demonstrates a commitment to ongoing support, both financial and technical, and to continuation of the program for a period sufficient to enable students to complete a degree/certificate."

- **Cal State, Chico** conducts faculty evaluation for its off-campus computer science program according to the same rules and standards as the on-campus student evaluation of faculty. The program is also evaluated by both students and site coordinators through a survey conducted each year. Chico's Computer Science Program has been in existence for over 10 years; the university has clearly demonstrated its commitment to this program.

- In assigning faculty to teach in the off-campus MBA program, the **University of Montana** considers the extra time required to prepare lectures. Accordingly, faculty members are provided with sufficient release time. Normally, teaching in the off-campus MBA program represents the faculty member's sole teaching responsibility during a semester. The faculty member is responsible only for a single televised course, which includes an on-campus section and up to three off-campus sites. During the semester, the faculty member is required to visit each off-campus site at least twice.

When the university enters new communities with its electronically delivered degree program, it quickly reaches a d[illegible]ion (usually after the first year of instruction) with regard to the permanence of that program and then makes a long-standing commitment to continued delivery of instruction sufficient to allow all students to complete their degrees. The Billings MBA program, which is entering its eighth year, has graduated 52 students.

With the planned addition of other sites across the state of Montana, the university intends to accelerate the delivery of its program by repeating each required course every second year rather than every third. This will enable students to pursue an accelerated pace through the program and possibly complete their MBA degree in as little as two years.

- **Red Rocks Community College's** contracts for newly appointed faculty require experience in the delivery of instruction through technology and/or telecommunicated means. The institution has demonstrated a commitment to ongoing support by funding positions that were originally supported by grants, paying annual network line charges, and paying equipment maintenance costs.

- **Bellevue Community College's** Telecourse/Teleconferencing Department has been in operation since 1986 and the Telecommunications Program since 1992. The Telecommunications Program has developed its own mission and goals and has formed a substantial number of partnerships with outside agencies. Telecommunications is a self-supporting program, which funds salaries, development grants, and equipment purchases. There is a full-time Director of Telecourses/Teleconferencing with one three-fourths support position, a full-time Director of Television Services, and a full-time Media Engineer with two full-time support positions. Students from the Media Communication and Technology Program assist in television productions. The Telecommunications Program has also created a one-year Production Assistant Certificate Program for students who have previous educational training in video production and can benefit from practical experience. In addition, the President of Bellevue Community College has made a strong commitment to distance learning.

The Online program of the University of Phoenix enjoys strong institutional support for its continuation and on-going growth and development. The program is also financially self-supporting; the financial, human, and technical resources required for the continuation of existing programs as well as for research and development into outreach, new technology, improved systems and new programs are available. Since it began seven years ago, UOP has upgraded its student technology three times, expanded the facilities which serve Online students, and invested in more sophisticated student tracking systems, accounting systems, phone systems and staff hardware and software.

The policies for faculty evaluation address teaching and professional activities related to electronically delivered courses as well as campus activity. Because the University of Phoenix exclusively employs adjunct faculty in both its campus and electronic classrooms, the emphasis for evaluation in both modalities is placed on teaching and professional development related to teaching activity. All faculty must hold an advanced degree and have current professional experience in the field they teach.

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- As the sole four-year institution in the state, the **University of Wyoming** has made a financial commitment to the delivery of off-campus courses. Legislative funding has been provided to support the off-campus programs. Although this funding does not cover all costs, the university also uses tuition revenue to support off-campus programs.

The Extended Degree Program has begun to play a central role in **Washington State University's** efforts to address the state's critical need for access to higher education. By creating the division of Extended University Affairs, the institution has indicated that ongoing support for the EDP will not only be available but will increase as the number of students and the degree offerings increase.

Faculty members have been acutely aware of the need to include consideration of teaching and scholarly activities related to the EDP as part of the overall criterion for evaluation, promotion and tenure. While no formal standards have been established, several faculty members have included material prepared for the EDP in the teaching portfolio submitted for tenure and promotion review. Program administrators continue to work with the faculty senate to establish an appropriate mechanism for evaluating distance teaching activities and including that evaluation in the tenure and promotion discussion.

10 GOOD PRACTICES IN EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

"The institution evaluates the program's educational effectiveness, including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student and faculty satisfaction. Students have access to such program evaluation data."

"The institution provides for assessment and documentation of student achievement in each course and at the completion of the program."

- Although students in the University of Montana's off-campus MBA program are registered in different sections than on-campus students, they receive the same lectures and take the same examinations as the on-campus students. The University of Montana has evaluated the educational effectiveness of its off-campus program and has published research documenting that the off-campus students' performance is as good or better than that of on-campus students. At the conclusion of each scheduled course, students are required to evaluate instructors and course content, using the same evaluation procedure employed in evaluating the on-campus section.

After completing all degree requirements, both off-campus and on-campus students complete a written comprehensive examination or write a thesis. Performance results on the exit examination for on-campus and off-campus students do not differ, and roughly the same percentage of students off-campus complete a thesis. A thesis defense for off-campus students is facilitated through video communication so that these students are no longer required to travel to Missoula.

- Each distance learning course at **Utah State University** is evaluated through regular university evaluation procedures. Evaluation results are available to students on request. Students are evaluated and followed through this program in the same way as on-campus students. They complete the identical requirements to graduate, and they must leave the same paper trail. Each student is also asked to evaluate the overall program at the time of graduation.

  One index of effectiveness is the employment of graduates of the program in counseling positions. In the first and second cycles, nearly all graduates were placed in counseling positions. In almost every instance, those who were not placed were restricted by their location. The placement goals envisioned at the beginning of the program have been exceeded.

- At **Red Rocks Community College**, the Distance Education, Alternative Learning, and Extended Campus Programs areas evaluate the educational effectiveness of their courses

including student headcount, retention, grade information, and student satisfaction. The college provides transcript documentation of student achievement in each course.

- The **University of Phoenix** has a comprehensive Adult Learning Outcomes Assessment program, which began simultaneously with the development of the Online program. The following mechanisms comprise what is known as the Academic Quality Management System:

  - Comprehensive Assessment of Major-Field Achievement - Assessment of knowledge and achievement in the major field is obtained through proctored pre- and post-testing on learning outcomes specified in the curriculum. Students are provided with a detailed explanation of their pre-test results in order to give them guidance and insight into their strengths and weaknesses as they embark on their degree program. When they graduate, they are provided with post-test results that indicate where they stand in relation to the rest of the UOP student population.
  - Affective Assessment - The affective assessment focuses on the development and change of personal and professional values and attitudes and on self-reported behaviors believed relevant to success in professional disciplines. It is administered at registration and again at graduation.

- Student and faculty end-of-course surveys - These indicate how students and faculty felt about the course, the curriculum, and the technology.
- Student Comment Analysis System - Students are asked to provide specific comments about faculty, curriculum, university services, technological support, or any other educational matter of concern to them.
- Faculty Grading Practices - The variance in faculty grading practices is reported out by a number of variables for feedback, self-improvement, and compliance with university standards.
- Registration & Graduation Surveys - These report student demographics and what our students expected upon entrance to our program, and how the program met these expectations upon graduation.
- Alumni Impact Surveys - These surveys indicate how our alumni feel about their education after they have had time to look back on it.
- Employer Impact Surveys - Students' employers are surveyed to determine their opinions about the education their employees received at UOP.

In addition, class-size reports, retention reports, and other management data are generated on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. The average class size in the Online program is 9. Retention averages 93% for single courses, and the graduation rate has been fairly consistent at 60%.

The outcomes data, based on approximately 400 graduates indicate that Online students perform as well or better in tests of cognitive achievement in comparison to their peers enrolled in the UOP campus programs. Assessment of student achievement in each course is the responsibility of faculty. Online faculty are required to create a syllabus that outlines their expectations, assignments, and grading criteria according to the course goals and objectives. Documentation occurs through attendance rosters, the return of student work, and official posting of final grades. In addition, all course transcripts are archived and can be called into use in the event of a grade dispute, or for quality control, research, or faculty development purposes.

- During Spring Quarter 1995, Bellevue Community College completed its ten-year accreditation evaluation process. BCC obtained a very positive appraisal and was accredited for the next ten years. The Telecommunications Cabinet continues to do self-assessments and provides regular reports to the Executive Dean of Educational Services, the College President, and the Board of Trustees.

Student evaluations are obtained each quarter, and staff of the Telecommunications Program work with faculty to determine what works well and what does not. At the time students return tapes from a completed telecourse, the Director of

Telecourses/Teleconferences asks for their comments about the course. The Telecommunications Cabinet also periodically evaluates the program.

The program has also gathered data comparing grade point averages, completion rates, and withdrawals of students in telecourses and students in traditional classrooms. Students have access to this data upon request, and the statistics are shared with students during advising.

Testing, assessment, and documentation of student achievement in each course and at the completion of the program are done in the same manner as for all students. The Director of Telecourses/Teleconferences works closely with telecourse students to ensure they stay on track, meet the general education requirements, and satisfy the distribution requirements for the Associate in Arts and Sciences Transfer Degree. The college's credential evaluator does a formal institution evaluation as the student nears graduation.

- For the University of Hawaii Nursing program, each course is evaluated in terms of appropriateness of the technology used for the delivery of the course. Evaluations are received from both students and faculty. Basic assessments indicate that there is no apparent difference in student achievement. Another benefit of the program uncovered through evaluations is that a collegiality develops among the students,

so that when they move around between the islands they have relationships that have started in the program, which help them with their interpersonal adjustments.

- **University of Alaska's Health Information Management** (HIM) Program is evaluated through a variety of methods: student assessments completed at the end of each semester, exit interviews with graduates of the program, students' performances on national examinations, and input from the HIM professional community through the HIM Advisory Committee. A survey of employer satisfaction will also be done at the end of the 1996-97 academic year.

  The HIM program director has maintained a database of student enrollments and tracked students who have left the program. Non-retention can be attributed to relocation, family or personal illness, or changes in employment.

- The **University of Arizona** has a formal process through which each unit is evaluated annually and on a five year cycle. In addition, the School of Library Science is evaluated at the Master's level by the American Library Association and was the first unit to achieve accreditation under new standards. The university requires all courses to be evaluated at the end of each semester. The School of Library Science uses evaluation data in curricular design and in promotion and retention decisions; results are available to students in the program.

- **Washington State University** has made ongoing evaluation and assessment, with a focus on student performance and satisfaction, a fundamental component of the Extended Degree Program. Program review measures continue to confirm the program's positive impact on students, faculty, and communities. Grades are high, and faculty are extremely satisfied with the quality of course work. Students are very satisfied with the effectiveness of EDP courses, faculty instruction, and EDP support services. Faculty maintain their positive response to these more mature and motivated students, and they appreciate the contribution EDP course materials have made to their more traditional teaching materials and procedures.

- The **University of Wyoming** believes strongly in the evaluation process and provides ample opportunities for course evaluation. For example there is a mechanism for a mid-term evaluation as well as an end-of-the term evaluation. Faculty are also given an opportunity to evaluate their experiences. Recently, the university has also begun evaluating the advising services provided to students.

  Students are evaluated throughout the semester and are given grades at the end of every term. When course grades are posted for students, there is no identification as to whether a course was taken on or off-campus.

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